

**SONOMA VALLEY CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING APRIL 23, 2014
SONOMA POLICE DEPARTMENT, COMMUNITY ROOM
175 FIRST STREET WEST, SONOMA
6:30 p.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Cynthia Wood, Rochelle Campana, Kirsten Lindquist, Angela White, Ken Brown, Bruce Green, Greg Carr, Tom Martin, Dick Fogg, Sean Bellach, Ditty Vella, Pat Pulvirenti

EXCUSED: Mark Bramfitt, Jack Ding

ABSENT: Clarence Jenkins

1. **Call To Order: 6:30 p.m.**
2. **Minutes Approved of March 26, 2014 Meeting**
3. **Public Comment: None**
4. **Applicant Name: La Luz Bilingual Center Resolution**
Owner Name: Same
Site Address: 17560 Greger Street, Sonoma
APN: 056-305-018

Request for a Use Permit to replace an existing building with a new 2,400 square foot building to include offices, meeting rooms, and storage to serve a community center on a 0.43 acre parcel.

Applicant presentation:

Juan Hernandez, Executive Director of La Luz Bilingual Center (also in attendance are Ken Adelson, George Bevan and Board members): La Luz's mission is to empower the community through education, leadership and self-advocacy. It was formed in 1990 to provide services to the Springs community. In 1995, the former church property on Gregor St. was turned into a community center and administrative offices. With funding from Impact 100, Sonoma County First 5, Sonoma County Human Services and matching funding, we decided to construct a new building instead of improving the existing one so that we could provide greater privacy and comfort for our clients and their kids and to expand and improve the office building. In Sonoma Valley, La Luz is the only organization where families could get health care, education, counseling, and a resource and referral program in a cultural and bilingual way. We contacted 65 properties within 300 feet of the property and there were no concerns regarding the project. Our goal is to provide a safe child care area, an entranceway to accommodate strollers and the disabled, private offices for counselors and adequate work spaces for staff and volunteers.

George Bevan, architect: I began work a year ago to remodel the cottage which was a former rectory. It's on Gregor St., a block off Highway 12 and kitty corner behind the Fairmont. It's zoned R1 and operating in a commercial context. The project is not to enlarge or maximize but to maintain staffing levels that was undersized and overwhelmed by small spaces and to provide more workable spaces. We're allowed 40% lot coverage and 35 feet in height – we're under 20 and keeping it a single story structure. We're sensitive to the neighborhood; the goal is not only ample space to conduct daily business but the exterior is as important as the interior, with natural lighting, and solar access. The open spaces will have benches for employee lunches and sits comfortably in a residential neighborhood. We have minimum setbacks and most of the net add is for the rear of the property and preserving 99% of the exterior gathering spaces. When approaching the property, there will be a landscape feel. It's still at a preliminary level, but materials will be long-lasting with low maintenance; it will be warm and inviting.

Commissioner questions:

Ms. Vella: Where is the parking for the six spaces – in front of Booker Hall?

George Bevan: There are six additional spots required as per the County because of the net square footage add, but we are asking for a waiver to four spots.

Ms. Vella: Does the parking currently impact the neighborhood?

Juan Hernandez: Our clients now are 50% walking, 20% dropped off, some bikes; the parking is primarily for the employees.

Mr. Bellach: Is the existing Booker Hall going to be rebuilt?

Juan Hernandez: No increase in the size of Booker Hall, just minor upgrades and paint, primarily to the rear of the development.

Wood: What kind of contact did you have with the neighborhood?

Juan Hernandez: We value our neighbors, and sensitive to their needs. We held an outreach in February, and everyone supported the organization and the project.

Mr. Martin: The building materials – what are they in relation to the existing Booker Hall?

George Bevan: The 1999 addition is colored stucco. The Hall is in its original form - concrete block. The work will tie or sweep in with paint to reference the other one. Materials-wise, trellising, softening of the landscape, use of stucco, many neighborhood houses use stucco, maybe metal siding or solar roofing – it's all still preliminary.

Chair Lindquist: The cinder block – seismic retrofit or modification required in conjunction with the changes?

George Bevan: No requirements, the project is detached and on its own. The '99 addition and '88 bathroom to the rear may trigger.

Chair Lindquist: The residential zoning – is the use grandfathered in and does it have a use permit?

George Bevan: The use permit was granted when the property was handed over and up to speed. The new building is in the existing use permit.

Chair Lindquist: Will the renovation lead to greater use and numbers of people using the facility?

Juan Hernandez: The building is for current use. We have staff working in the community and we are in talks with the school district to co-locate at El Verano Elementary to provide social services.

Mr. Fogg: You're on two lots legally merged now recognized as one by the County. Any required lot line setbacks?

George Bevan: Standard R1 setbacks – 20 front, 20 back.

Mr. Fogg: What's the lot coverage?

George Bevan: 40% but usage is much less.

Mr. Carr: The parking will probably be more significant when it comes to staff review before the Commission.

Public questions and comments:

Fred Allebach, 8th St. E: It should be a complete shoo-in, for all the good that La Luz does in the community.

Commissioner comments and discussions:

Ms. White: I agree with Mr. Allebach. I'm for it.

Motion: Ms. Campana. I move that resolution be approved as submitted. Ms. White seconded. Motion passed: All in favor, none opposed.

5. Presentation:

Steve Ehret, from Regional Parks, and Ken Tam, Project Manager, presented information on three different trails in Sonoma Valley, a continuation of the Sonoma bike path. To the south is Schellville Trail, to the north is Central Sonoma Valley Trail, and to the Santa Rosa limits is Sonoma Valley Trail, with different status on all three pieces.

Schellville Trail: located at 8th St. East in Schellville. Until the mid-1990s, it operated as an active rail line and belonged to various railroad companies. Union Pacific owns most of it and has been selling pieces of it. The proposal is to develop a trail 4 miles long from 121/12 north to connect with the Sonoma bike path. It will be an 8 ft wide paved trail separate from the roadway. When done, it will connect with the 500 mile long San Francisco Bay trail and San Pablo Bay. The County has secured three easements and fee title along the railroad right of way but is currently in negotiations to acquire sections of properties from Union Pacific, private property owners, and SMART. In 2013, a trailhead located at 8th St. East and East Napa St. was developed but the County still needs money since the project is not fully funded, for acquisition, environmental and design work. There is some money through Measure M but those funds will be used to leverage other funds.

Central Sonoma Valley Trail: located from Verano Ave. and Maxwell Park north to Agua Caliente Rd. This project began in the 1990s and has lots of grass roots effort that includes several community groups. The idea was to improve highway safety and mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists along the Highway 12 corridor – a parallel trail along Highway 12. A feasibility study was done in 2001 which identified a three mile transportation network on-street, right of way using existing sidewalks, signage and bike lanes, and off-street, a path separate from the roadway.

There are three segments of the trail:

Sonoma Charter School-Vailetti Trail (0.31 miles) – This is part of a larger project beginning at Vailetti Dr. south through Sonoma Charter School and ending at Depot Rd. This project will be constructed by a private developer (Vailetti family and MidPen Housing came before the SVCAC last month) as part of a mixed use project that includes affordable and senior housing, a retail complex, community garden and a segment of the Central Sonoma Valley Trail. Funded by credited county park mitigation fees, construction will proceed after the housing/retail application is approved by the County.

Flowery School Trail (0.11 miles) – This segment connects Flowery School and Larson Park and is fully funded through a grant and done by the County. The County is negotiating with the Sonoma Valley Unified School District for a trail easement to construct improvements on school property.

Verano Ave. Trail (0.31 miles) – This trail segment is located along Verano Ave. north of Maxwell Regional Park. It starts at Main St. and continues west to Sonoma Creek. There are no sidewalks on either side of the road and the proposed improvements will include a paved path separate from traffic on Verano Ave. This project is fully funded also through MTC Lifeline federal funds, Measure M local sales tax, and County park mitigation fees. The environmental and design/engineering work for Flowery and Verano Ave. Trails will begin in 2014 and scheduled completion is the summer of 2015.

Sonoma Valley Trail: A feasibility study to connect Sonoma with Santa Rosa along the Highway 12 corridor was funded through Cal Trans' Community Based Transportation Planning grant. The study area would be a separate paved roadway stretching 13 miles from Melita Rd. at the Santa Rosa city limits south to Agua Caliente Rd. at the end of the existing Central Sonoma Valley Trail. This would give pedestrians and bicyclists a safe way to travel along Highway 12, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage walking and bicycling for health, and attract tourists visiting Sonoma Valley wineries and parks. It would provide trail connections to wineries, schools, churches, local businesses and tie in existing bus routes and also bike paths. This project would encourage public involvement, input from the community, property owners, local businesses, and other stakeholders. Multiple community meetings, surveys and workshops will be conducted in English and Spanish. A draft study will be prepared for additional public input before a final report is

presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The timeline is projected from May 2014 through end of 2015 at which time we will look for grants to complete other studies and for acquisition, permits and construction. For updates on all the projects, the website address is parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov

Commissioner comments:

Ms. Vella: This is a wonderful project. It would get bikers off Arnold Dr.

Mr. Bellach: What percentage is currently funded when you combine all three segments together?

Ken Tam: The Sonoma Valley Trail is just the feasibility study, there is no money for acquisition, design and engineering or other things. The Central Sonoma Valley Trail is not fully funded, we are doing the two pieces and Valetti is constructing their portion of the trail for public benefit and funded through credited park mitigation fees. For Schellville, we have \$650,000 set aside; the project is not fully covered. As mentioned before, Union Pacific wanted a million and we were willing to pay \$250,000.

Mr. Bellach: SMART owns a piece of land, any plans to connect to Sonoma?

Ken Tam: No, ownership of that stretch was part of Northwest Pacific Railroad so when SMART acquired the piece along the Highway 12 corridor, they acquired that piece as well.

Mr. Bellach: Sonoma Valley Trail and Central Sonoma Valley Trail going through the Springs and Highway 12, all will have shoulder and buffer in between or existing bike lane strip?

Ken Tam: The Central Sonoma Valley Trail will be a combination of bike lanes, shoulders, sidewalks. Only a few segments have separation and buffer – on Verano Ave., the one going through the school and also the one going through Valetti.

Ms. White: The Schellville Trail, is Union Pacific aware of the amount of traffic on 8th St. East?

Ken Tam: No, their main interest is to sell of the strip.

Mr. Martin: The Central Sonoma Valley Trail, a couple of trails lead into private property. Is this the general plan – what happens when the trail arrives at someone's property?

Ken Tam: There are two locations: one is a rental unit at Happy Lane and the owner may possibly sell to the County; the other piece is before the mobile home park and the owner wanted to sell the house but we just wanted the easement.

Chair Lindquist: Do you have an anticipated completion date? When can we use it?

Ken Tam: For instance, the trail from Santa Rosa to Sebastopol to Forestville, the West County project began 20 years ago and it's still not done. There are 20+ funding sources and so much still needs to be done, we have to work with property owners.....

Chair Lindquist: Can we look at 2034?

Ken Tam: The Schellville project is a high priority, it will happen sooner.

Mr. Bellach: Any plans to clean up Verano connecting with the Sonoma bike path. The intersection past McDonald's and Taco Bell, the cross street is a busy intersection. Is there a way to make it safer?

Ken Tam: Not right now.

Mr. Carr: The MidPen project is moving forward through the hearing process.

Ms. Vella: The pieces that are being built, at least people are using the sections.

Ken Tam: Certain segments are useable such as Larson Park going to Flowery.

Public comments:

Fred Allebach, 8th St. E: It'll be a couple years before it's done and there's pressure to open the parking lot for private use, for Sonoma's Best parking. What's the status of the parking lot and putting a crosswalk and stop sign at the corner and are you willing to open up the lot for private use?

Steve Ehret: Re: the parking lot, Supervisor Gorin wants to explore all the different options. Public Works is requiring crosswalks and stop signs but we're checking it all out.

Linda States, Glen Ellen: The Central Sonoma Valley Trail – it's Highway 12, on side streets?

Ken Tam: Yes.

Commissioner comments:

Mr. Bellach: The project is exciting. I ride my bike and the trails address some of the gaps and link together Sonoma Valley to Santa Rosa. It should be a priority and Verano should be bumped up rather than Schellville. There have been quite a few bike deaths in Sonoma County, and a complete bike path is preferred but shoulders and buffer zones are good.

Ms. Pulvirenti: There is a new law that a driver of a car must stay so many feet from a cyclist. How does this fit into the planning when you have a bike path next to the highway?

Ken Tam: It's three feet and five feet separation of the bike path next to the highway.

Ms. Pulvirenti: There is a huge amount of people visiting who want to bike in Sonoma and going to Santa Rosa, so good work.

Chair Lindquist: I would like to see a sense of urgency given so many bicyclists here. It should be a priority for Santa Rosa County to find funding. We should not have to wait 20 years.

6. Consideration of Items for Future Agenda: None

7. Meeting Adjourned: 7:45 p.m.